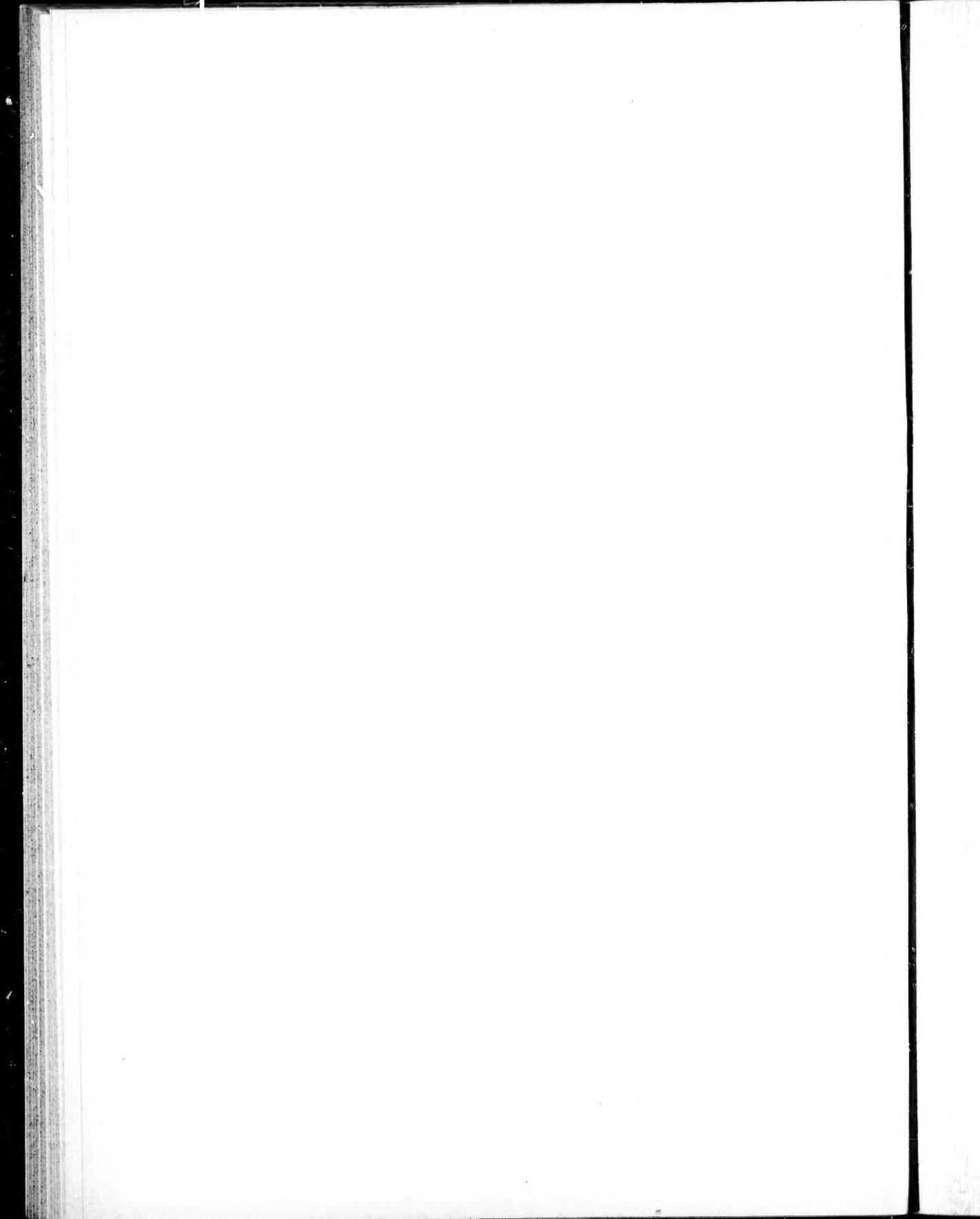




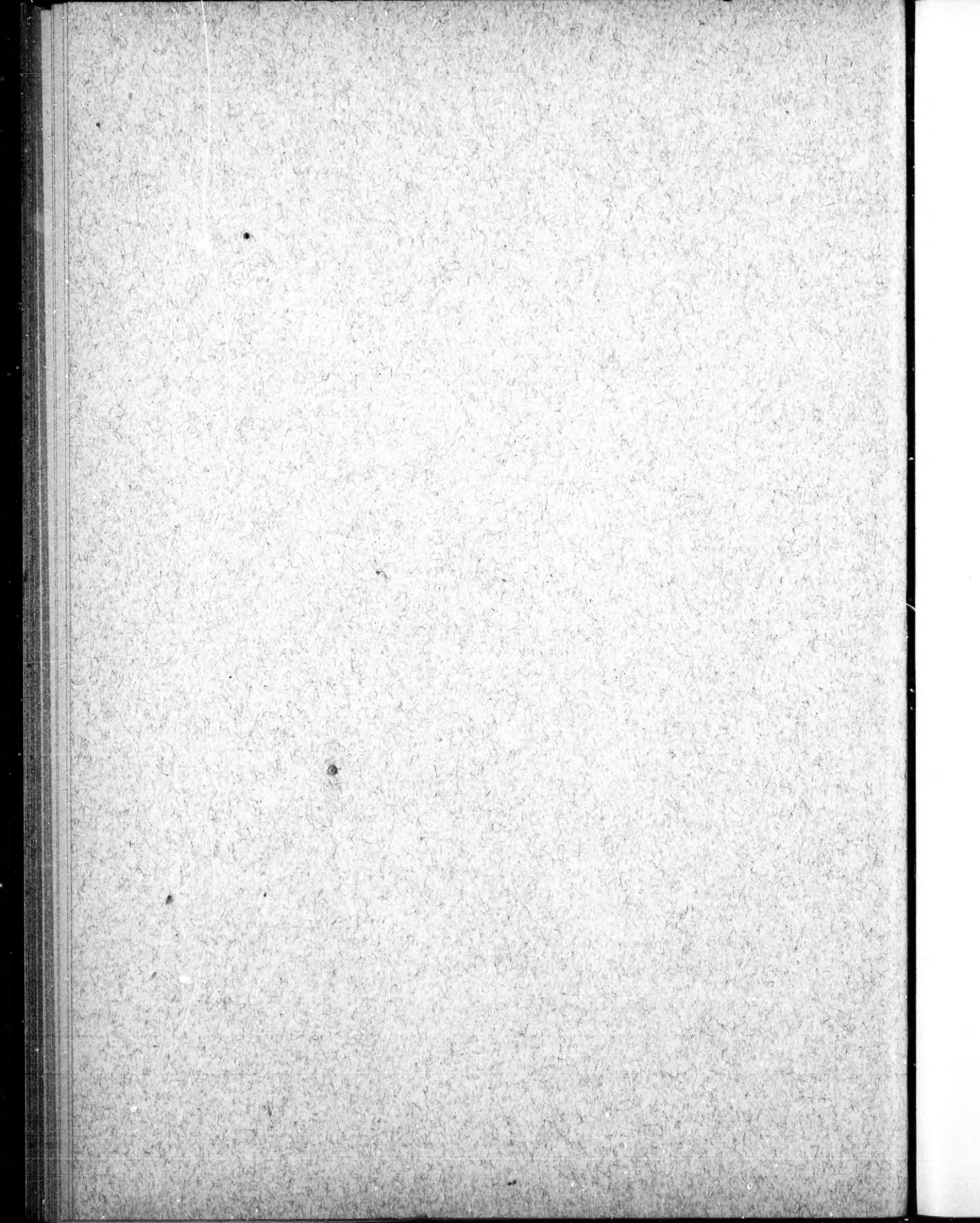
MEMORIALS
RESPECTING
THE WORKING OF THE LAWS GOVERNING
REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS

SUBMITTED TO THE
EXECUTIVE OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

AT ITS SITTING OF THE 29th OF MARCH 1892

IN THE NAME OF
THE HOSPICE SAINT-CHARLES DE QUEBEC

BY
Rev. Messire **BERNIER & J. A. CHARLEBOIS, N. P.**



Mr Premier,

Gentlemen,

The cause of poor and abandoned children is every one's cause. This is why, in answer to the repeated requests of Rev. Mr. Bernier, I leave my accustomed rôle to address you. I do not intend to make a speech, but merely to submit you a few remarks with reference to the laws governing our Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and, at the same time, to expose as briefly as possible the objections which the Ladies of the Good Shepherd have to the condition of affairs created by the new legislation.

The better to understand the present aspect of the question, I consider it necessary to state the law as it existed previous to 1892 ; we will then pass to the law as it now exists since the amendments adopted at the sessions of 1892 and 1893.

Let us first study the law which governs Reformatory ^{Reformatory} Schools. We find it at articles 2891 and following, and articles 3174 and following of the Revised Statutes of the Province of Quebec.

The Reformatory Schools are established to provide a ^{Object of the} better discipline for juvenile offenders of both sexes, under 16 years of age, sentenced to imprisonment after committing an offence and to save them, if possible, from the contamination to which they would be exposed if they were sentenced to pass their time of detention in a common gaol.

These schools are established in virtue of a certificate granted by the Lieutenant-Governor—the directors have the powers of a governor of a prison ;—within eight days from the imprisonment of an offender, the directors are bound to give notice to the Provincial Secretary ;—the directors may place out the delinquents with a person of confidence, but such permission must be renewed every three months and may be cancelled by the directors, at any time, at will.

Organisation
and establish-
ment of the R.
S.

The Reformatory Schools must be inspected at least once a year by one of the prison inspectors.

The delinquent was confined on the order of a district magistrate or justices of the peace before whom the offender was prosecuted.

In 1892, the mode of confinement was changed and by the act 55-56 Victoria, chapter 27, the justice of the peace or district magistrate before whom the case is tried is obliged to take notes of the evidence which notes are afterwards transmitted to the Provincial Secretary.

Law of 1892
changes in the
mode of obtain-
ing confine-
ment.

It is true that the magistrate has power to issue the order of commitment, *but the government is responsible for the cost of maintenance of the child only if the Provincial Secretary, basing his opinion on the documents sent to him, informs the directors of the Reformatory School that they can keep the child.*

Within what delay must the Provincial Secretary send this notice ? Is it fifteen days, one month, three months after receiving the magistrate's notes ? The law does not say. The silence of the Provincial Secretary, through the forgetfulness, the omission of an official, through the loss of documents accidentally mislaid or destroyed may set aside the most just sentence requiring immediate execution in the very interests of the delinquent. To any one who will reflect for a moment, it is evident that if the order of the magistrate is not carried out by an effective and immediate confinement, the order is not worth the paper on which it is written.

Law ven-
ues re-
fining
from the legi-
slation of 1892.

Without examining whether this legislation does not imply usurpation of judicial power, I will merely ask you to consider whether it is not *ultra vires* and I call the attention of the Crown Law Officers to articles 809 and following of the Criminal Code.

Legislation
of 1892 on R.
S. *ultra vires*.

In my humble opinion, I do not think that the justices of the peace or the magistrate trying a juvenile offender under the provisions of the Code are bound, in order to imprison the offender, to submit their sentence to the judgment in revision of the Provincial Secretary.

This statute also contains other provisions which do not affect the interests at stake in this case.

I now proceed to examine the laws governing Industrial Schools as contained in articles 3127 and following of the Revised Statutes P. Q. ^{Industrial Schools.}

The Industrial, like the Reformatory, School is established by a certificate granted by the Lieutenant Governor. One of the prison inspectors is selected by the Lieutenant Governor to inspect the Industrial Schools—the Lieutenant Governor in Council may associate another person with him—the Industrial Schools must be inspected once a year.

Under this law, the children who could be confined in Industrial Schools, were sent there on the following formalities : ^{Class of Children that could be confined in I. S.}

I. Two rate payers could bring before two justices of the peace or magistrate any child under 12 years :

(a) If he was fatherless or motherless and if the surviving parent was disorderly in conduct ;

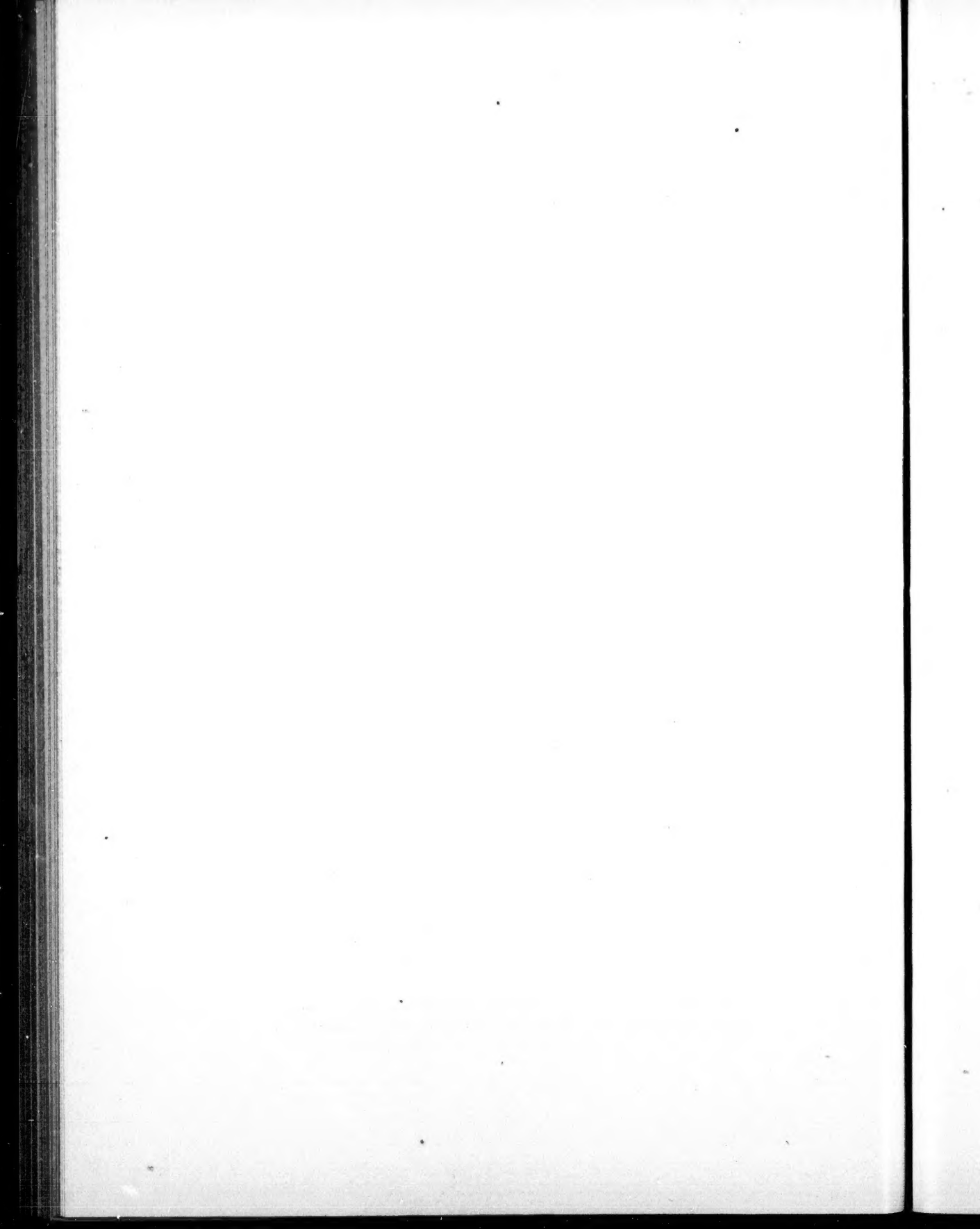
(b) If the parents were criminals sent to the penitentiary ;

(c) If, in either case, the child had no means of support and no relative bound to support him ;

If the judge, after weighing the evidence, found that the child came under the prescribed conditions, he gave the order to send him at once to the Industrial School ;

II. The father or mother could likewise have any vicious child whom they could not control, confined on an order of a magistrate, but the latter gave this order only after having received a certain deposit from the parents to cover the cost of the child's keep for one month, over and above the provincial contribution ;

III. The mayor of a municipality with the authorization of the council of such municipality could also bring before a



justice of the peace or magistrate, any child under 12 years of age who, owing to the continual illness or extreme poverty or vicious habits of his parents, required to be protected and ask that such child be sent to an Industrial School. On sufficient proof, the magistrate ordered that the child be confined and in such case the municipality became responsible for one half of the cost of maintenance.

In virtue of this law, a child could not be confined in an Industrial School before he was seven years of age nor could he be kept there after he was 12 years old, unless his parents undertook to pay his board or unless he were prevented from leaving through illness or infirmity.

Minimum
and maximum
of age of Chil-
dren who could
be confined in
I. S.

This order to keep the child could be executed only after having been approved by the Provincial Secretary.

The law, after having so provided for the detention of the children, laid down the formalities to be observed in the orders of discharge, gave a certain recourse against municipalities and individuals and afterwards determined the mode of discharge as follows :

Mode of dis-
charge.

(a) The Lieutenant Governor could order that a child be transferred from one school to another ;

(b) He could likewise order that a child be discharged from an industrial school either absolutely or conditionally.

In 1888 and 1890 some changes were made in the law governing Industrial and Reformatory Schools. Thus art. 3,138 of the Revised Statutes was amended to allow the entrance into Industrial Schools of any child under 12 years on certain conditions mentioned in the Statute and also to confine therein deaf-mute children sent to insane asylums (52 Vict. chap. 34).

Legislation
of 1889.

The legislation of 1890, like the preceding, affects only Industrial Schools and allows children of four years of age to be sent there. Before that law, the minimum age was seven years ; by the legislation of 1892, it is fixed at six years. This same law also enacted that a child from four to nine years of age could be sent to the Agricultural Orphanage of Notre Dame de Montfort.

Legislation
of 1890.

Such were the laws governing Industrial Schools up to 1892. Then came the amendments of 1892 and 1893.

Legislation
of 1892 and
1893 on I. S.

The law which required that the application for confinement be made by two rate payers was amended in 1892. Under legislation of 1892 one rate payer can demand confinement. A single rate payer may apply for the confinement of a child from six to twelve years of age for about the same reasons as those given in the old law. To this provision there has merely been added that the fact of a child's having neither tutor nor relative in direct line capable of taking care of him, exposes him to become a vagrant and to die of hunger.

This provision of the law may in some cases simplify the proof which has to be made to obtain an order for confinement.

The same statute repeals article 3128 of the Revised Statutes as to the manner of proceeding for obtaining the order and substitutes the mode which I will explain as briefly as possible. New mode of proceeding.

The complaint is made before two justices of the peace or a magistrate, after notice given to the parents.

The justice of the peace, if satisfied that the child comes under the prescribed conditions, does not give the order but reports to the Provincial Secretary to whom he sends his notes and a copy of the complaint.

The Provincial Secretary, after examining the documents sent to him, decides whether the child is to be confined and it is only after such examination that he signs the order of admission if he thinks proper; this order is sent to the magistrate, who, in his turn, sends it with the child to the Industrial School; this order is the warrant which authorizes the detention of the child.

May I be permitted to observe here, in passing, that this machinery is complicated and likely to offer serious drawbacks when put into practice. Slowness of this mode of proceeding.

There will be no lack of cases where the confinement of a child must be effected without delay and where the fact of refusing it will be a cruel act because it will prolong the suffering of a poor little being who has no protection beyond that which the State is pleased to give him.

We have now come to the law of last session which I will endeavor to go over rapidly with you. Legislation of 1893.

Under the old law a child confined in Industrial School could be placed out in a private family by the Directors of the institution; this permission could be revoked at any time and the children so placed out were under the safeguard of the Directors of the school from which they came. It may be easily imagined that the number for each school must naturally have been limited.

Confinement
of children before 1893.

Art. 3157 *a.*, amending art. 3157 of the Revised Statutes, gives to the Provincial Secretary the power to place out in private families, the children already confined in an Industrial school.

Placing out of
children under
legislation of
1893 : powers
given to Pro-
vincial Secre-
tary.

Art. 3157 *b.* gives him power to send a child into a private family at first instead of sending him to an Industrial School and this in nearly all the cases of confinement provided for by law.

Art. 3157 *c.* allows the Provincial Secretary to liberate a child instead of compelling him to remain in the family in which he was placed. It is important to observe that the law does not say that the child, on leaving the family in which he was placed, will necessarily return to an Industrial School for the remaining period of his confinement.

The other provisions of the Statute regulate certain details of the new system which it is intended to inaugurate.

To resume, this law gives the Provincial Secretary almost absolute power over children in Industrial Schools or those who are to enter them; he may remove them from the school when he thinks proper, he may refuse their admittance to a school in order to place them in a family and the next day he may discharge them without consulting any one.

I do not wish in any way to reflect on the good faith of the Provincial Secretary nor on his desire to do well, but can he assure us that his successors in the future will not abuse of these extraordinary powers, that they will devote the same attention and labor, as he, to the performance of his duties towards these little unfortunates. (See Appendix D.)

Having given, in as few words as possible, a synopsis of the legislation on Reformatory and Industrial Schools, I will now retrace my steps and expose the objections we have to existing legislation.

Before the session of 1892, it was a comparatively easy matter to obtain admission to Reformatory and Industrial Schools; there may have been abuses, but we think that these abuses, if any there were, have been greatly exaggerated. It was sought to do away with pretended abuses and, we may be permitted to say, the result has been but to fall into the contrary excess.

In a memorial which we submitted to the Prime Minister on this same question during the month of January, last we said: "Since the 1st July 1892 there has not been a single admission to the Industrial School in Quebec; a little girl may have been admitted to the Reformatory School. The same remark applies to the Reformatory and Industrial School of St. Joseph de la Délivrance de Lévis; up to the 20th November last, not a single child had been admitted to the Reformatory or Industrial School. Is it to that end that the Government wishes to maintain Reformatory and Industrial Schools?"

Can it be that in the whole district of Quebec—which for that purpose, I think, comprises all that part of the Province to the east of Three Rivers on one side of the river and Arthabaska on the other—there has not been during that period of six months more than one child to send to the Reformatory.

It is difficult to believe that in the whole of that vast extent of territory there has not been, during that period, a single child abandoned by its parents, a single child with drunken or vicious parents and in danger of being lost who should not have been sent to the Industrial School.

Perhaps some children who might not have had the right to go to the Industrial School have been refused admission, but at the same time the admission has been prevented of a number of children, who for very grave reasons should have been admitted. Still more, under the pretext of removing an abuse, children confined for some time who should not have been discharged, have been set at liberty. In some cases, it was inhumane; in others, it was something worse, as we will shortly prove.

Let us study more closely the law on Industrial Schools. It may perhaps not be inadvisable to show the distinction

Excess in reaction, against abuses.

Disastrous Result of last legislation.

Objections to legislation on I. S.

which must be made between the Reformatory School and the Industrial School. If the Reformatory School is useful, we must not overlook the fact that the Industrial School is none the less necessary and that some consider the Industrial School as a more useful institution to society than the Reformatory School.

The Reformatory School receives children who are already guilty. The Industrial School receives children still innocent but in serious danger of becoming criminal. The first assumes the ever painful obligation of punishing and the duty of reforming, if possible ; the mission of the second is to preserve threatened innocence and strengthen it for future struggles. To resume, I would say that the object of a Reformatory School is to make a good citizen out of a criminal ; the Industrial School prevents its inmates from becoming criminals ; one acts on minds already blighted, the other prevents blight ; the Industrial School is a safe refuge against the dangers of evil associations, of bad example and pernicious counsel, because the children received in these schools are not old enough to know and propagate evil ; they are only little unfortunates abandoned by heartless parents, or quite little things whom lost women cannot properly bring up near them ; they are children to be pitied but whom no one can blame.

The consequence of this definition is that if the doors of our Reformatory Schools should be open to our young offenders, those of our Industrial Schools should be of as easy access. I regret to say, that contrary, to the opinion of all who are authorities on the subject, contrary to the recommendations frequently expressed under many forms by the prison inspectors appointed and paid by the Government, changes have been made in existing laws in which the rôle and utility of our Industrial Schools seems to have been ignored. If on the one hand it has been sought to keep a vigilant eye on admissions to our schools, on the other hand it has been sought as it were to close their doors. What has to be done to-day to get a child sent there ? It is necessary to have an inquiry before a magistrate or two justices of the peace who must take notes of the evidence ; send a report with a copy of the complaint to the Provincial Secretary who, in his turn, decides *ex parte* whether the child is to be confined.

Difference
between the
Reformatory
School and In-
dustrial School

Access to I.
S. made easy.

Notwithstanding the confidence we may have in the ability of the minister in charge of that Department, we take the liberty of respectfully stating that we have strong doubts as to the efficacy of such a system. The Provincial Secretary has too many things to occupy his attention to be able to do justice to these cases which in many instances have to be decided promptly. It must not be forgotten that the reasons which render the admission of a child to an Industrial School necessary are nearly always urgent and require that it be done at once.

I am not of those who would refuse to the State the means of protecting itself against treachery and imposition, but it seems to me that there was a surer and less radical way of securing the proper working of the law. ^{A change less radical to be preferred.}

The judges might have retained the power which they had to order confinement in Industrial Schools, by giving the Provincial Secretary the right to revise the sentence of the magistrates when, from information obtained, it would have been established that the child should not have been sent to the Industrial School. ^{Judges should have certain powers.}

With legislation such as that which governs us, entrance to the Industrial Schools may be stopped when we like, but there is a danger of doing this without discernment. ^{Inconveniences to ministers.}

I would go even further and say that this legislation exposes the Minister, even if he was the most perfect of men, to be solicited to make admission to these schools a matter of political favour. In our eyes, the cause of lost and abandoned children is one which interests society to too high a degree to be left for an instant at the mercy of the fluctuations of political parties.

Up to 1893, the legislation might have been defective ; but, if I may be permitted to respectfully express my opinion, I would say that that of last session has not improved it. ^{Legislation of 1893 more disastrous than that of 1892.}

Far from it, this legislation has introduced in our laws principles with reference to the manner of conducting our Industrial Schools which are diametrically opposed to everything which has been written and said on the subject for thirty years.

In effect, the most absolute powers given to any one man are always as dangerous for him who exercises them as for those who are subjected to them. Not only can the Minister at his pleasure confine a child, suspend or refuse such confinement, but he may if he choose send a child either to an Industrial school or into a private family on such conditions and for such time as he may think proper. If the report of a judge recommends the maximum length of confinement, the Secretary may, if pleases, free the child. The safeguard provided by the old law and which required the obtaining of an order of the Lieutenant-Governor in council no longer exists.

Absolute powers given.

If there be great objections to the system by which the Provincial Secretary is constituted judge in first and last resort of all causes of confinement in the school, there are still more to his taking directly under his charge all the children in the Province who are or who may hereafter be confined in them. As a matter of principle, we object to replacing the education and control which a young child would receive in our Industrial Schools by the education and control which might be given to him in any private family.

Objections to minister taking children under his charge.

We repeat that a minister has not enough time to attend to the fate and welfare of the children he may place out in various parts of the Province and whom he must look after when he has placed them out. Even if the number were only fifty he would not find a way and still less the leisure to attend to the numerous details necessitated by the supervision of these children. And after all could any family, even with the best of certificates, always fulfill its obligations towards the child?

Minister has not the leisure to look after the children.

Amongst the families who present themselves before the Secretary provided with a certificate of respectability, is it not possible that some may have obtained the certificate by false and fraudulent means? And then what would be the fate of the unfortunate children, delivered over to the cupidity of persons unworthy of being their protectors, who, for the bread they will give them, will exact excessive labour from them or to fathers of families who will respect nothing, not even the innocence of the children confided to their care? Will the Provincial Secretary hear the complaints of these

unfortunate victims, especially when they are hundreds of miles away from the capital ? Inspection is necessary. By whom and how will these families with whom the children are placed, be inspected ? This inspection, if carried out, will cost something to the Province in salaries, travelling, expenses, etc.

Nothing can replace the education given in our Industrial Schools, and in support of my theory I will give the opinion of the Government Officers. In their report for 1882, (p. 41), the Inspectors say :

Industrial School education cannot be replaced.

" Hundreds of youths are now skilled mechanics, good workmen and honest citizens owing entirely to these schools, which they were fortunate enough to attend for a few years ".....

Opinion of government inspectors

" These unhappy youths who are now glad to earn their bread honestly would people our gaols and penitentiaries if they had not passed some years under the vigilant and paternal care of the Brothers to whom the management of the school is intrusted. Therefore, instead of a nursery for vagabonds, we have a vigorous young manhood cheerfully striving to secure a future in the society of honest men. "

Excellence of the Industrial Schools.

In the report for 1885 we find the following remarks on Reformatory and Industrial Schools, pages

" There are numbers of these schools in all countries which are more or less successful where they have been founded for personal or speculative motives, but their success surprises the most incredulous and they become models which all desire to imitate but do not succeed in doing so, wherever they are founded for a charitable object and are kept up by the self-sacrifice and christian devotedness of their directors.

" What are the causes which have yielded and continue to yield such wonderful and satisfactory results in the schools ?

" As a French writer said, they may be reduced to the four following : 1st the situation of the establishment ; 2nd the system under which the children live and labour ; 3rd the spirit of discipline ; 4th the qualities of the teachers and of the directors.

" I would only say a few words as regards the two latter

causes, as they are the most important and best calculated to prove that only persons in religious orders or a few exceptional laymen are capable of displaying such devotedness, and deep feelings of charity, and such kindness to others. In the first place, as regards the spirit of discipline,—what do we see, at the head of each group of children? A brother who takes his share of the work, who shows more ardour and more skill than the others who apply to him when they meet any difficulty, who gives advice to those who hesitate, who assists those who weaken and who encourages those who lag. Instead of a harassing, morose and irritable superintendent, we have a person who shares the fatigues of the others, a more experienced brother, an obliging and devoted friend.”

Later on in 1887 we find in the report of the same officers (page 59) the following :

“ If they go in a similar way to the girls reformatory schools kept by the Nuns of the Good Shepherd at Quebec and Montreal, there also they will recognize and acknowledge the influence of religion on the delinquents ; they will admire the remarkable success of these schools and will say of them that there is one thing to be regretted and that is that there is not a larger number of children there. There are enough of them whom vicious and heartless parents abandon, give scandal to and lead to certain perdition. This is what is done to them and soon there will be but the gaol for refuge if the hand of charity does not come to their assistance by providing religious instruction from them, and does not turn them from their evil ways by means of good advice and good example. ”

Opinion of
the Inspectors
on the Industrial School at
Quebec.

“ Is it the education of a family, in most instances unknown, which it is sought to substitute to that given by these admirable institutions of which we have just spoken and in which the State has every possible guarantee that it is worthily represented with the children confided to them and which it can control by the yearly inspections ?

It is permitted to believe that when this legislation was introduced, the Government was perhaps not aware of the reports made by its officers and did not foresee all the drawbacks which it would meet in the carrying out of the law.

Legislation
of 1893 is con-
trary to recom-
mendation of
Inspectors.

I stated just now that the legislation of 1893, which gave the Provincial Secretary power to decide, by himself, when a child should be set at liberty is contrary to all the recommendations made on many occasions by its own inspectors.

Those who are charged by the Government with the duty of inspecting these schools have constantly advised the Government to come to an understanding with the director or directress of the school before granting the discharge of a child.

In the report of 1899, we find the following at page 104 :

“ Does it not appear that it would be more prudent to ask the Director once every quarter, or every six weeks for a list of the children who have distinguished themselves by their good conduct, and to grant them, according to their merits, from one to six months diminution of sentence. This would be a powerful incentive, to induce the pupils to behave themselves properly ; these rewards would also touch their hearts to such an extent that they would not leave the school without having seriously amended their conduct.

“ It is evident that this line of action would be the most just and the most likely to lead to good results ; it would double the ascendancy of the managing staff, which would exercise an extensive influence over the behaviour of the children, for the hope of obtaining the promised reward, would naturally lead these children to reject every thought of failing in their duties in the presence of those, who would, in the near future, be the judges of their behaviour and of the value and extent of their reward, or who might decide that no favour was deserved.”

In the report of 1891 (page 99) we find an expression of opinion which leaves no doubt as to the intention of the inspectors :

“ It has been proved a thousand times over, that pardons granted too soon and too readily have invariably been a cause of misfortune to those whom it was intended to favor.

Inconveniences resulting from pardons granted too readily.

“ Such pardons should never be granted, without the previous sanction and approval of the Superior of the establishment, and in case he should deem it expedient to withhold

his consent, not until such time as he (the director), the only competent judge in such matters, should declare the time opportune. The pardoning of children in the reformatory schools, when granted too soon and too readily, impedes and compromises their advancement."

We have no hesitation in declaring that the system just introduced by which the minister is constituted sole judge as to the advisability of discharging a child, will give a fatal blow to the authority of the directors and directresses of these schools.

Let us see on the contrary what is recommended by the inspectors who are the most competent judges in these matters when they speak of the discharges when made in an inconsiderate manner. (Report of 1883, p. 51.)

"The law should also authorize the directors not to give back really reformed children to their parents when they are certain that such parents are drunkards, profligates or abandoned women, because returning them to such persons would evidently cause these unfortunates to relapse into crime and place them on the edge of the abyss into which their unworthy parents wish to precipitate them once more and further because it would render useless the expenditure of large sums of money by the Government in favour of the reformation of these children and sacrifice the years of care and solicitude of those who have charge of the schools."

Reformed children not to be given back to unworthy parents.

Further on, in the same report, they say:

"It is above all necessary, that children who are in the way of being reformed, should be maintained in their good dispositions; they must be preserved from the danger of bad example and bad company and assisted until they have sufficient strength and have lived honestly long enough to be able to walk alone in the path of honour and duty."

In his report of 1884, Inspector Desaulniers said:

"A great many children, young boys and girls, have been reformed by these schools; it may even be said that over 80 per cent have been entirely reformed. If some of this number have relapsed into evil ways, this misfortune has generally been due to the inadequate protection given them and the almost complete state of abandonment in which they find themselves on leaving school."

I might cite other opinions of persons who have devoted themselves to the cause of these unfortunates whose fate we are now considering and who have profoundly studied the subject and have bequeathed to those who take an interest in this matter, works of considerable magnitude, the result of long experience.

I prefer to confine myself to what I find in the official documents and I have met the objections which I could foresee by means of the information obtained from that source. I thought I should base my arguments on the opinion and reports of the officers who enjoy the confidence of the Government.

As we have just seen by the extracts above quoted, the opinion of the inspectors of houses of detention is entirely in favour of our argument ; their opinions are ours, their manner of judging and appreciating things co-incides with ours, and to combat our arguments it must be declared that the reports of the inspectors whose expenses are paid by the Province, have no weight whatever and that such inspections are an unnecessary expense.

Opinion of
Inspectors
favorable to
our views.

The directresses of the schools are accused of keeping the children and of desiring to unnecessarily prolong their confinement for the sordid motive of making more money. I will not stop to refute that charge which is as unfounded as it is unjust. I will simply say that as the Sisters of the Good Shepherd have devoted themselves to the work of reforming children, they wish the work they have done to produce fruits, that the money spent for saving these children from moral ruin be not needlessly spent ; they desire that children exposed to return into the same sphere where they were found, be protected for a longer time until they have acquired enough strength, have lived an honest life long enough to be able to walk safely in the path of honour and duty. This manner of judging the question is the only true one and it is based on the opinion of those who are an authority on the subject. I will now go further and say that the statistics which give the number of children discharged from the St. Charles school of Quebec and the causes of their discharge show that, last year, for the period extending from the month of March 1892 to the month of March 1893, the

Unfounded
accusations.

Large number of discharges recommended by superior of the School of St. Charles.

number of discharges from the Reformatory and from the Industrial Schools was 84 and of this number 21, that is 25 per cent were discharged before the expiration of their time, at the request of the Directress of the School who had succeeded in placing them in safety.

But, we are told that we refused to obey the order of the Provincial Secretary ordering us, on the 26th January 1893, to hand over Eva Labonté to Napoléon Morin, and that a threatening letter was required to make us obey. To that we answer that, as directresses of a house of detention, we were obliged to conform to the law ; that, previous to last session, the law required that every order for a discharge be given by the Lieutenant-Governor : that positive orders from the Provincial Secretary, dated the 2nd August 1889, stated that children confined in the school should be discharged only on order of the Lieutenant-Governor when the period has not expired (See documents A, B, C, annexed.)

Refused to discharge
owing to illegal
order.

As Eva Labonté's term had not expired and the order for her discharge made no mention of any order in council, we had to refuse to give her up. As the Department took upon itself the responsibility of the discharge by a second letter dated the 26th January, we complied with that order as we were no longer responsible. There was therefore no unwillingness on the part of the directresses of the school ; their conduct was quite regular, that of the Department was not.

I have exposed the question by giving an analysis of the law in its most salient points ; I have shown the objections to the existing system and our doubts as to its efficiency. I have but to communicate to you the results of the legislation of 1892 under the ideas which inspired it. The picture is a sad one and the story of these unfortunes is sometimes painful to relate.

What we are about to tell are facts in all their sorrowful reality.

Inconveniences resulting
from certain
discharges. Bad
working of the
law.

1. On the 13th May 1892, Blanche Aurore X....., aged barely 9, was discharged before the expiration of her period of detention, and was handed over to her grand father and grand mother, her only interested relatives. She was of

insubordinate and vicious character when in contact with other children. The superioress of the asylum informed the Department of the serious effects of discharging the child, the danger of her being lost, etc., but no answer was given to these observations. Her old grand parents came some weeks after and complained to the superioress that they were in despair about the child, that they could no longer exercise any control over her, that her only idea was to escape and run about the streets, which she still does.

2. On the 30th May 1892, Marie Louise X, aged 13, crippled and deaf, was discharged. An aunt obtained her discharge from the Government on false pretences ; she took the child with her into a disorderly house. Representations were made in time to the Department by the superioress of the Asylum as to the sad fate which would befall the child. Moreover the child was infirm and for that reason alone the law allowed the extension of her period of confinement, but no heed was paid either to the danger of immorality nor to the infirmity ; the discharge was maintained. Later on the child complained to the superioress of the ill-treatment she was made to undergo to induce her to commit evil.

3. On the 27th June, Philomène X, aged 10, left after the expiration of her term. She was wicked and difficult to manage ; the continuation of her confinement was applied for and refused. She was placed out in service but run away twice, she is now on the streets.

4. On the 11th July, 1892, Marie Louise X, aged 8, of insubordinate character. The previous refusals prevented any attempt at further representations.

5. Delima X, aged 7, discharged on the 30th August ; she was of instinctively immoral character, vicious and had no relatives. No one knows where the mother is, for a long time ; she is believed to be a lost woman.

A child of 7 years discharged without any person to take care of her.

The child was on the streets for several weeks, going from one police station to another. Protection was refused her by the mayor ; the Government always refused to continue her term of confinement notwithstanding weighty reasons ; a lady tried to take her but had to put her out at the end of four days. She would still be on the streets were it not for

the charity of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, who consented to take her back because the child had no home but the streets. When she came to the asylum she was exhausted. She had slept for two or three nights on the wooden guard-beds of the police station and begged her food from the public.

The child
passes several
nights in a
police station.

This sad story shows what precautions should be taken before granting a discharge. When the Department grants a discharge it should ascertain whether the parents, guardian or tutor will be there to receive the child ; it is absolutely necessary that steps be taken to hand her over to those persons.

In a christian and civilized society, the case of Delima X. should not be repeated.

6. Albertir X., aged 12, discharged on the 15th September, sick and infirm ; no one will take her for that reason ; she is without protection and still without a place. Under the law her infirmity authorized the extension of her term of confinement.

7. Amanda X., aged 7, parents unknown, term not expired, discharged on the 29th September. The unfortunate mother of this illegitimate child passed herself off as her sister and as such claimed the child at the Department. Information was asked by the latter and accurately given by the superioress. This did not however prevent the mother from coming on that very day to the asylum with a formal order from the Government to discharge the child.

8. Blanche X., aged 7, discharged on the 18th October, at the expiration of her term. This child had, with difficulty, been removed from the baneful influence of her mother who was a drunkard ; she was handed over to her mother and has no one to protect her.

9. Azilda X., aged 10, discharged on the 8th November, term not expired, insubordinate character, no explanations given.

10. Emma X., parents unknown, aged 14, discharged on 28th March, 1892. Could not be placed out owing to her vicious conduct and insubordinate character before the month of June.

A child leaves the reformatory to go to the common goal.

Her masters sent her away soon after. She changed places several times and finally took to the street on which she was a vagrant for three weeks.

The police finally placed her at the Hotel Dieu until she could find a place; after a couple of weeks the police took her from the Hotel Dieu to prison. It is impossible to put her in the Reformatory: the Government wishes to economize, the municipality will not assume charge of her as the law requires; then who will pay the cost of her imprisonment and maintenance? It costs 25 cents a day at the prison; it would cost 18 at the Reformatory. The child's morals must be protected; why then send her to gaol in preference?

11. Amanda X., discharged on the 22nd November, vicious inclinations, bad character, mother disorderly, father a confirmed drunkard. Representations were made without success to obtain the continuation of her imprisonment; a sister of hers came for her at the asylum with an order for her discharge; that sister was under the influence of liquor.

Amanda X...
given up to an
unworthy
person.

What conclusions are we to draw from the facts I have just placed before you? They are numerous and not to detain you too long I will mention those which seem to me to be the most important.

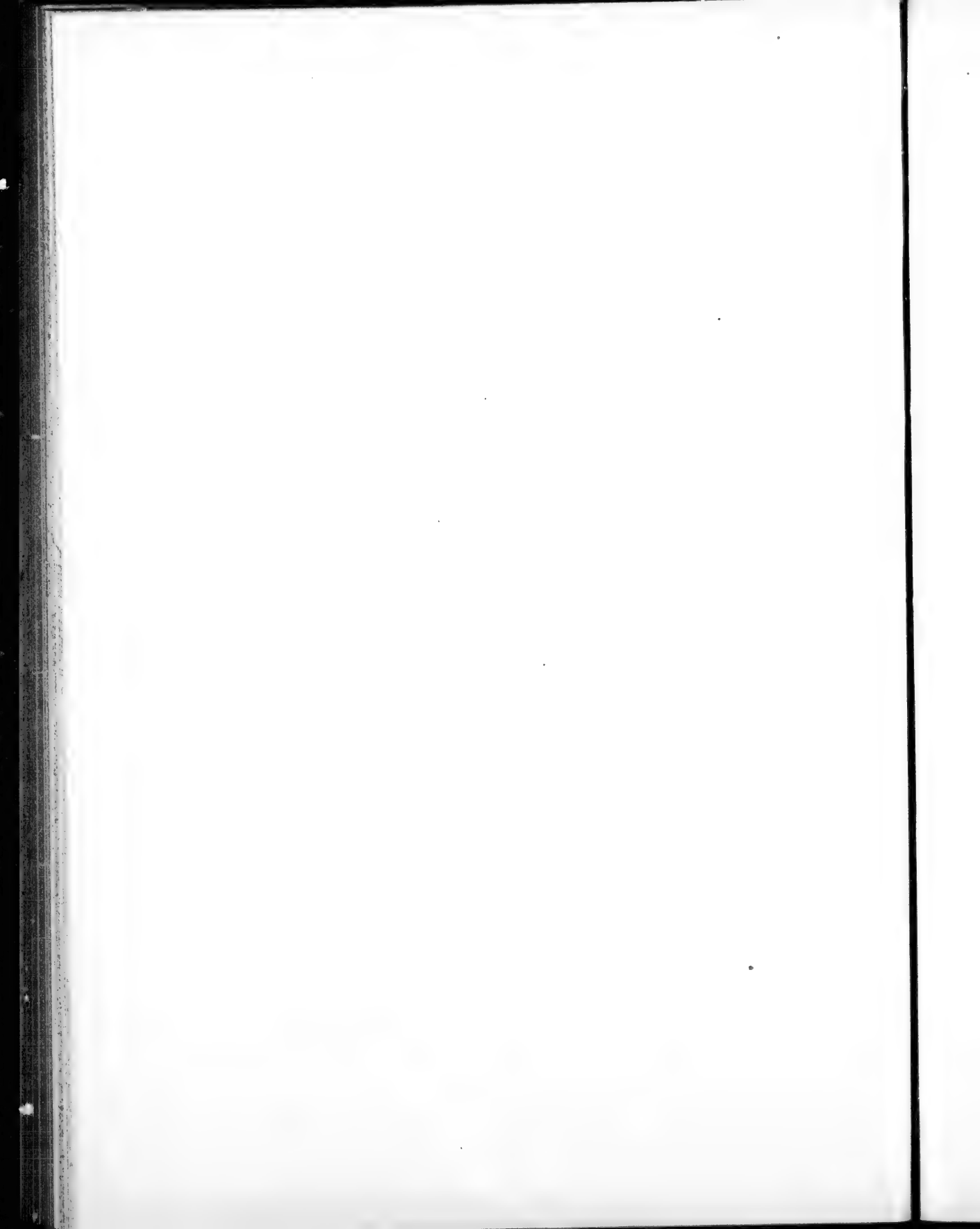
Defects of
the system.

1. Too young children have been replaced in the sphere from which they were drawn, thereby exposing them to lose the fruit of the sacrifices made to prevent them from being contaminated. By so doing the Department has complied with the letter but not with the spirit of the law. These drawbacks show once more the necessity there is for changing our legislation.

Children sent
back to bad
surroundings.

2. With a view to economy and to remedy what was thought to be an abuse, the Department has, in some cases, shortened, in an imprudent manner the term of detention of some delinquents without consulting the directress of the school and sometimes against her most urgent representations; in others, there was urgent necessity for prolonging the term of confinement of some children especially when *infirm* or *sick*. But, for reasons which we ignore, the Department has refused to avail itself of the law to favour these unfortunates.

Refusals to
prolong con-
finement of
infirm.



3. Some discharges have been ordered without taking the necessary precautions either to hand over the children to their parents or tutors capable of supporting them or into the hands of responsible persons disposed to undertake their care and education, thereby, exposing these children to be abandoned and even to being without shelter.

Releases granted without necessary precautions.

4. The representations made by the directress of the school have not always been taken into account; it would seem as if it were thought that she could not have any other motive than to improve the financial position of her establishment.

No heed is given to representations of directress.

Applications have been made since the 1st May last. At least twenty cases have occurred in which children should have been sent to the school; steps were taken but without success. The persons refused were not without importance. We are informed by Rev. Mr. Bélanger, *curé* of St. Roch, that he himself, through the police magistrate, solicited the admission of a child to the Quebec Industrial School for very special and serious reasons. He was refused like the others.

Absolute suspension of admission.

To show the willingness of the Nuns in the midst of these difficulties, they submitted, without complaint, to the species of investigation which it was sought to make about their affairs, contrary to law, to verify the correctness of their reports.

Investigation made on Charles School.

Information which could have been obtained by correspondence with the Superioress of St. Charles Asylum or through the inspector, was sought for by sending a young man who was not authorized by order in Council as he should have been done. To judge by his conduct he had neither the ability, the discernment nor the prudence necessary to perform a mission as difficult as it was delicate. For over a week the children were questioned in a more or less discreet manner by this Commissioner. He did not hesitate during his inquiry to run the risk of awaking in these young minds the almost extinguished recollection of shameful acts which occurred years ago and which it would have been better for some of these young offenders to have left forever in oblivion.

Required information could be obtained from Lady Superioress.

An unexperienced young man is sent to get the required information.

Forgetful of his duties and of the respect due to a lady, the Superioress of the school then present, he pushed indiscretion, (I might use a harsher term) so far as to make one

He forgets the deference he owes to a Lady.

of the inmates relate the indecent assault which her miserable father had committed on her person.

I will say no more on that subject to qualify the acts and deeds of that gentleman. Those who hear me will admit, that if no crying injustice has been committed, no deep humiliation inflicted on women, there has certainly been an irregularity and a great imprudence to say no more.

Has confidence been lost in these Nuns who, if they have displayed too much zeal, have done so through love of their neighbours and to relieve the misfortunes of those who are abandoned by all even by their fathers and mothers? If not, why these inquiries and all these irregular proceedings?

The Inspector of these schools has not, to our knowledge, failed in his duty. He, a man of experience and tact, and could have given the Government all the information it required without hurting any one's feelings. We feel that if we have erred we have acted in good faith and that our conduct, whatever may be the reasons for criticizing it, should not have made us lose the respect and confidence of the Government which has confided to us a difficult mission to which we devoted ourselves without considering the extent of the sacrifice asked of us.

The Inspector was the proper person to investigate.

We were about to make great improvements in our Reformatory and Industrial School by devoting a considerable portion of our economies effected at the cost of many privations and of arduous labour, and now we are stopped by this new legislation; our hesitation is such that after having purchased the Marine Hospital we are debating whether we have not gone too fast and whether all these changes, these inquiries are not premonitory signs of an order which will soon be served upon us to close our doors to those whom we have hitherto succoured and whom we must abandon to their miserable fate.

Hesitation to make improvements.

In conclusion we respectfully submit:

1. That the application made of the law in force up to 1893 has been an erroneous application which has led to serious abuses which must be remedied.

Conclusion. Charges require red.

2. That the discharges should be controlled by a commission consisting of the Inspectors of Reformatory and Indus-

trial schools and presided by the Provincial Secretary. This commission should meet every three or six months and obtain every information before ordering a discharge.

3. The provision in the old law by which the discharge was effected by an order of the Lieutenant-Governor should be restored.

4. The legislation which gives the Provincial Secretary the power to liberate the children or to place them out with families on such conditions as he pleases should be abolished and the commission above mentioned might be authorized to come to an understanding with the directors of the various schools as to placing out the children.

5. The present law should be amended so as to favour the admission into the Reformatory and Industrial Schools of the children of vicious, dishonest and drunken parents.

6. To protect children exposed to become vagrants the moral sense of municipalities must not be relied on and consequently art. 3140 (55-56 Viet., chap. 29) should be amended so as to allow the mayor of a municipality to use the powers conferred on him by this article without requiring the authorization of his council.

7. The judges who preside at criminal terms should have power to send to Reformatory and Industrial schools the young children of persons sentenced for criminal offences and this at the expense of the municipality in which they reside, when it appears by the trial that these persons have committed outrages or assaults on their children, or when the conduct of the fathers, or mothers, or other persons having charge of them is so vicious or disorderly that there is reason to fear for the education of these children. This power should be exercised by the judge either *proprio motu* or at the request of the Attorney-General or his representative, or on that of a rate-payer residing in the district in which the Criminal Court sits.

8. The magistrate exercising the powers conferred on him either by the law governing Reformatory Schools or that governing Industrial Schools should have the power to confine the children in either of such schools.

The order should be executory at once, but the magistrate should send to the Provincial Secretary the full record of the case with the evidence and the reasons for giving the order. The Provincial Secretary might have the power to revise that order in the event of the inspector of these schools reporting that the reasons are not sufficient and in such case the decision of the Provincial Secretary should be notified to the magistrates and directors of the school and be in writing with a statement of the reasons. Within the eight days from the sending of such notice the child should be returned to its parents or protectors who would be amenable to a fine if they refused to come for it.

9. The age at which children are to leave Industrial Schools should be 16 as for Reformatory schools.

(SIGNED) J. A. CHARLEBOIS,

*Specialy authorized by the
Sisters of the Good Shepherd.*

Quebec, 29th March, 1893.

APPENDIX A.

PROVINCIAL SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT

Quebec, 26th January, 1893.

REVEREND SISTER DIRECTRESS,

Industrial School, Quebec.

Madam,

I am directed by the Provincial Secretary, to authorize you to hand over to Mr Napoléon Morin blacksmith of St. Raphael, county of Bellechasse, Eva Labonté, of Quebec, confined in your Industrial School since the 16th December 1891.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

JOS. BOIVIN,

Assistant Provincial, Secretary.

Is. P. P.

APPENDIX B.

PROVINCIAL SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT

Quebec, 26th January, 1893.

REVEREND SISTER DIRECTRESS,

Industrial School, Quebec.

Madam,

Mr. Napoléon Morin reports at this office that you refuse to hand Eva Labonté over to him in accordance with the instructions contained in my letter of the 26th January 1893 and that you require an order from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor. In view of these facts, the Honourable Provincial Secretary directs me to inform you that His Honour is absent from the capital for a fortnight and that the order cannot be obtained before the expiration of that delay.

If you do not comply with the order given you on the 26th of this month, you will not be paid for the board of that child from the 26th instant until she is discharged.

I have the honour, etc.

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) JOS. DUMONT,
Acting Assistant Provincial Secretary.

APPENDIX C.

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC }
SECRETARY'S OFFICE }

Quebec, 2nd August, 1889.

Madam,

Referring to your letter of the 26th July last, I have the honour by order of the Honourable Provincial Secretary to inform you that children confined in the school are not to be discharged without an order from the Lieutenant Governor when their time has not expired.

I have the honour, etc.

PH. J. JOLICŒUR,
Assistant Secretary.

REV. SISTER ST-LOUIS DE GONZAGUE,
Hospice St-Charles, Quebec.

APPENDIX D.

*Act of last session conferring on the Provincial Secretary
the extraordinary powers mentioned in the memorial.*

56 VICT. CAP. XXX.

An Act to amend the law respecting Industrial Schools.

[Assented to 27th February, 1893.]

HER MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of
the Legislature of Quebec, enacts as follows :

I. The following articles are added after article 3157 of
the Revised Statutes :

Articles added
after R. S.,
art. 3157.

“ **3157a.** The Provincial Secretary may, at any time, order any child detained in an industrial school to be placed, on such conditions as he shall determine, with a person or family of respectability and worthy of confidence who consents to receive, feed, maintain and lodge him in a suitable manner.

Permit by
Provincial
Secretary for
children to be
placed out.

“ **3157b.** In the cases mentioned in section 4 of the act 55-56 Victoria, chapter 29, the Provincial Secretary may also order that the child, instead of being transferred to an industrial school, shall be placed out as indicated in article 3157a.

Application of
preceding
article to 55-
56 V., c. 29,
s. 4.

“ **3157c.** The Provincial Secretary may, in his discretion, at any time order that any such child be relieved from the obligation of living with the persons or families with whom he has been so placed.

Child may be
relieved from
obligation un-
der article
3157a.

“ **3157d.** The time during which a child is absent from the school, under an order of the Provincial Secretary, is considered as an integral portion of the term of his confinement.

Certain time
to count as
part of his
confinement.

“ **3157e.** A child, who escapes from the house of the person with whom he is placed under such an order, or who refuses to return to the school after the cancelling of the order, or on the expiry of the term fixed therein, is considered as having escaped from the school.

What is con-
sidered as an
escape.

“ **3157f.** Nothing is due the directors of a school for the board and maintenance of a child from the reception of the order of the Provincial Secretary and during the time the child remains out of the school under such order.”

Directors not
to be paid for
time child is
not at school.

2. This act shall come into force on the day of its sanction.

-Coming into
force.

REMARKS

Made by Abbé B. BERNIER, Chaplain of the Convent of the Good Shepherd in Quebec, on the 29th March 1893, before the Honourable Executive Council of the Province of Quebec.

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN,

Mr Charlebois has shown you what the laws were which govern Reformatory and Industrial Schools eight or ten years ago, the changes made in them since that date and especially the amendments made in 1892. He has also showed you how these laws have worked since these amendments.

You may have observed, gentlemen, that if there are abuses in the application of these laws, the remedies which have been sought for the evil have far from effected a cure, but that, on the contrary, these remedies have caused so violent a commotion in the work of reformatory and industrial schools that they are threatened with destruction.

Where is the fault at present? Is it in the law and in the false interpretation and application of the law? Is it due to the fact that the cost of maintaining the children has in a great measure been imposed on the municipallities? I am inclined to believe that it is due to all three of the above causes. The remarks made by Mr Charlebois are very clear and the facts he has pointed out speak for themselves. Evidently there is a serious defect. Still, reformatory schools are an absolute necessity and it is positively asserted that there is a desire to maintain them. Can they be maintained without some abuses creeping in? I do not think so, however willing one may be both in reforming the laws and in applying them more judiciously. And the reason for which it will

be difficult to prevent all abuses is that the cases which present themselves are very varied in their circumstances, both on the side of the parents, owing to their situation or their dispositions and on the side of the children. It is impossible to foresee everything. By placing numerous and difficult obstacles in the way, the entrance to these Asylums will eventually be closed.

It seems to me, therefore, important in every legislation to thoroughly understand the subject matter of such legislation so as to provide for every requirement and obtain all the good possible from it.

VARIED CONDITIONS AND SITUATIONS OF THE CHILDREN PREVIOUS
TO CONFINEMENT.

Children liable to come under the laws governing reformatory and industrial schools generally belong to the poor classes. It very seldom happens, although it may occasionally, that children of families in comfortable circumstances are sent to reformatory schools. These families place such of their children as are difficult to manage or are of bad character in educational establishments at an early age to protect and reform them. This is done quietly and without making any noise about it.

The poor classes have not the same advantages. However, in these classes, the children who generally come to the reformatory and industrial schools are those whose position in their families has ceased to be normal or those whose character is bad and vicious. I mean by abnormal position that of a child who has lost its father or mother or both.

In the country places orphans are easily placed in families, for there is much compassion for these unfortunates and charity provides for them in some way or other, unless amongst these children there are some of bad character. In the case of children whose father survives, regard must be had to the fact that the father is obliged to absent himself from home to earn bread for his family. It is the same when the mother survives ; she must leave the house, and leave her children alone if she does not wish to see them starve. If the parents are alive, but are vicious and the children without any other protectors bound by law to support them, then

arise cases of urgency and extreme necessity. As long as the parents are good, hard-working, in great but temporary trouble, you are sure to see these poor parents struggling against poverty, becoming more attached than ever to their children, seeking protection here and there until Providence comes to their aid and withdraws them from so critical a situation. It is not the children of such families who come to the reformatory and industrial schools.

But if these children are unprotected, numerous in a family, with the surviving father a debauchee, a drunkard, an idler ; if the surviving mother is lazy, heartless, stupid, addicted to drunkenness or other vices, what will become of the children ? Such situations, if rare in country parts, are but too frequent in towns and large villages. To circumstances already very dangerous for children, must be added in some instances a bad character and vicious precocity ; for as you know, gentlemen, poverty begets vice. What happens then ? Vice breaks out and flaunts its shame ; these miserable parents ruin their children and the unfortunate children ruin each other. All the neighborhood becomes excited and complains both of the parents and the children who are a source of danger. Then steps are taken to get the authorities to remedy this sad state of affairs. It is the Oblate Father in his Congregation, the *curé* in his parish or a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society who undertakes this charitable mission, a mission of devotedness and heroic patience, a difficult and often a delicate mission, for even in these cases great care must be taken not to offend any one and there are sometimes many difficulties to be overcome.

Do you suppose, now, that it is always easy to decide the parents or other interested persons to give up their children that they may be sent to the Reformatory and Industrial schools ? It is sometimes most difficult, especially in the country. Many prejudices and erroneous impressions against Reformatory and Industrial schools have to be set aside ; all the officious busybodies in the parish or amongst the relatives have something to say about it. For them, these schools are worse than prisons ; the children are badly, cruelly treated in them ; they fear they will never see the children again, etc., etc.

These are facts which we constantly come across in most country parts. It is often a very serious undertaking to decide the parents to let their children go. Once these obstacles are overcome, must we again revert to that series of difficult proceedings which it is impossible to observe in nearly all our rural municipalities ?

As a rule, you will find the near and distant relatives, even those who are notoriously scandalous, attached to their children and they will do their best to keep them from being sent away.

Thus it is that, in the country parts, cases of admission to Reformatory and Industrial schools are rare in proportion to the population. They are more frequent in towns for three reasons :

1. There is less prejudice against the schools ; the parents are on the spot ; they see with their own eyes, and find out for themselves how the children are treated in these schools :

2. The children are more exposed to the danger of perversion than in country parts ; there is agglomeration and want of room ; most of the children have only the street to live in and are constantly exposed to perversion ; add to that the painful necessity in which the father or mother is sometimes placed of leaving the house and earning the living of the family ;

3. It is more difficult to place the children in town than in the country.

I would take the liberty of observing that when a child requires to be sent to an Industrial or Reformatory school, whether he be in the country or in the town, it is necessary that the law authorizing such admissions should make them easy and consequently avoid a cumulation of formalities which makes admission to these schools difficult if not impossible.

Otherwise a great many of these children who really need reformation or protection cannot be saved from the wreck. They will only be got hold of later on when they fall into the hands of justice after their misdeeds.

The law as amended supposes, for its being put in

operation, magistrates who can hold a regular court, as regards the procedure. Now, at least three fourths of the rural municipalities are not organized for this. The magistrates can barely read and sign their names : they have no clerk. One can hardly expect them to know how to exact, in a judicious and opportune manner, the taking of an oath when particular circumstances require it.

With respect to the various situations and conditions of the children before confinement, I have only one word more to say concerning children liable to be sent to a reformatory school. What fault or misdemeanour in the child will allow a judge to sentence it to a reformatory ? What defect of character will be found sufficiently serious to deserve sending to the reformatory ?

It is true that the law specifies certain cases, but it leaves a vast field open to interpretation on the subject. Who will be deemed competent to interpret the law in these various cases ? This is a remark which I submit for your consideration and I think is not inopportune.

THE CHILD AT THE SCHOOL.

I now suppose a girl admitted to a reformatory or industrial school. Is it better to let her complete her term at the school or to place her out in a private family ? Generally, in my opinion, if the child has been admitted for proper reasons (it should not be otherwise), it is better she should finish her time. She will do better in the school than she could in any private family, with very few exceptions ; she will find in the school everything she wants for the cultivation of her mind and intelligence, for religious instruction, initiation in work, etc. ; she will find there true mothers full of devotedness, whose only object is to promote the welfare and happiness of the child. What more can she find in a family to which she is a stranger ? Will she find as much ? Could she not find worse ? On the one hand, it is admitted that the school is necessary ; on the other hand, a law is passed which allows the Minister to put the school aside when he pleases.

The principle seems to be to consider it proper that these establishments be confided to religious communities ; on the

other hand, laws are enacted to remove from the religious direction of these institutions the children destined to these schools and confide them to private families. There may be weighty reasons to justify this, but it is logically difficult to understand.

THE CHILD AFTER BEING DISCHARGED.

When a young girl has completed her term is all work and attention over as far as she is concerned? Is there nothing to be done beyond setting her free?

No; those who have had charge of the child up to that moment must not abandon her to her fate; they must afford her means to place herself suitably. But before placing her we must not overlook the point of departure; the child came to the school to correct herself or to be protected against the danger of perdition. The question to be then asked is: Is the child reformed; is she in a condition to return without danger to the sphere from which she came? If the child has become good, when she leaves she will be given to her parents if she has any or if not she will be placed by the directresses in a respectable family. But when the term of confinement expires, if the child be not sufficiently reformed, if it be found that she is still of a bad and insubordinate character with vicious instincts; and if you suppose the child good, but if you see before you but miserable debauched parents who claim the child to place her in the midst of perdition and scandal, what then is to be done? For it must not be forgotten that these children are very young; some even come out before they are twelve years old. Until lately while perhaps derogating from the letter of the law, its spirit and intention seemed to be interpreted by ordering the continuation of the term in either of the following cases: when the child was claimed by miserable parents who had been and might still be the cause of its perdition; when the child was vicious or of uncontrollable character which prevented her from being properly placed out.

Then, relying on the information given by the Directress, an order was given to continue the confinement for some time longer so as to complete the reformation of the child and remove her from the danger which awaited her.

But since the month of May last the children have been set at liberty anyhow ; even, all those who were infirm although the law allows the continuation of their term. These discharges under such circumstances are most dangerous and deplorable. It simply means rendering unnecessary the sacrifices which the Government or the municipalities have hitherto made for protecting these children. Is there not in this an urgent necessity for amending the law so as to avoid such sad consequences ?

It has often happened that children sent to the Industrial School have barely spent a few months in the asylum before it was found that these children should be, not in the Industrial but in the Reformatory School, owing to the wicked and vicious instincts which showed themselves in them. The law should provide for such cases so that the Directress might be able to classify these children properly.

I confine myself to these observations. What we have said on the subject shows that much more still might be said. As I remarked just now, the situations in which the children of the poor classes are placed are varied and multiplied and the dangers of perdition surrounding these children are great and frequent, especially in the towns. Since the necessity of these schools is admitted, there can be no discussion on the subject. As regards the laws governing these matters, it is easy to perceive by an experience of nine or ten months that these laws as amended have the result in this district of Quebec of allowing but one admission into the two asylums of St. Joseph de la Délivrance, Levis, and the St. Charles Asylum in Quebec ; that these laws, I say, are not made for maintaining works of such importance and that they must be amended.

The municipalities have neither sympathy nor pity for the unfortunates as you are aware, gentlemen. It is not always easy for them to tax the rate payers for the support of these institutions. On such a basis the latter will never support themselves. Such is the conclusion of an article entitled "*Mendicité et Vagabondage* (Mendicity and Vagrancy) published in 1893 in the *Monde* of Montreal :

“ The real culprits are those unnatural fathers, those heart-

less mothers who impose on public charity and, for the few cents they collect, endanger the morals of their children.

"For the latter, there is no other resource than the reformatory schools where a discipline, strict but tempered by the affectionate kindness of the sisters who have it observed, gives these children the habit of a regular life, a taste for work and the means of earning their living honestly.

"These establishments are not sufficiently numerous, especially in large modern cities. Admission to them should be easier and society is greatly interested in confiding to trained and disinterested hands the moral education of these children, deprived as they are of good examples, of elevated and sound ideas which protect them against the seductions of their own passions.

This is of the highest interest for public order. The danger of our modern society, in which love of well-being plays so important a part and seems to be the object of all our actions, is to impel young intellects and young hearts into a fatal path in order to satisfy that desire for material satisfaction. This unfortunate propensity must be checked. The Reformatory Schools with their religious teaching, their schools and workshops, are the safest means for staying the evil.

"In France, generous efforts are being made to amend penal legislation in that sense and to facilitate the sending of young offenders to Reformatory Schools. And they are perfectly right."

However, we are aware that the most difficult point of this important question is not to regularize the law in order to make it effective, but to find the necessary resources for meeting the wants. God will, I hope, come to your aid in this respect ; your wisdom and your devotedness to the welfare of our country will do the rest.

P. BERNIER,

Priest.

Quebec, 29th March, 1893.